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In the Claims:

Please amend the claims as follows. Please cancel claims 6-7, 11 and 14 without prejudice.
Applicant reserves the right to pursue the canceled claims or similar variations of them.

1) (Currently amended) A method of [determining if a printing process operated correctly
comprising the steps of] inspecting printing, the method comprising:
digitally watermarking an image, said watermark being redundantly applied in [multiple] areas
of said image,
printing said image on a carrier,
acquiring a second image of the image printed on said carrier,
[reading] detecting the digital watermark [data] from [each area] areas of said second image, and
determining [the] an extent to which the digital watermark is detected in the areas as a measure
of quality of the printing [from the acquired digital watermark data].

2) (Currently amended) The method recited in claim 1 wherein said watermark includes a [grid]
signal embedded into the image at selected spatial frequencies.

3) (Original) The method recited in claim 1 wherein said carrier is a label.

4) (Original) The method recited in claim 1 wherein said second image is acquired using a
digital camera.

5) (Currently amended) The method recited in claim 3 wherein said label is [rejected if said
digital watermark data does not meet certain criteria] evaluated based on strength of watermark
signal detected in the areas as the measure of the quality of the printing.

6-7) (Canceled)

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8) (Currently amended) A method of [~~determining the quality of a printed image comprising the~~ ~~steps of~~] inspecting quality of printing, the printing including a first image that has been digitally modified to embed a digital watermark signal and printed on a carrier to create a printed image, the method comprising:
[~~digitally modifying said first image to embed a digital watermark in said image;~~
~~printing said first image onto a carrier to create a printed image;~~]
acquiring a second image of said printed image,
reading said watermark signal from said second image to [~~generate watermark data~~] compute a measure of the digital watermark signal strength embedded in the second image, and determining [~~the~~] quality of said printing from [~~said watermark data~~] the measure of the digital watermark signal strength.

9) (Original) The method recited in claim 8 wherein said carrier is a label.

10) (Currently amended) The method recited in claim 8 wherein said watermark comprises a [~~grid~~] signal embedded into the image at selected spatial frequencies.

11) (Canceled).

12) (Original) The method recited in claim 8 wherein said watermark is redundantly embedded in multiple areas of said image.

13) (Original) The method recited in claim 12 wherein said carrier is a label.

14) (Canceled)

15) (Currently amended) A system for [~~determining the quality of~~] inspecting a printed image, said printed image including a digital watermark, said watermark being redundantly applied to [~~multiple~~] areas of said printed image, said system comprising,

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an image capture device for acquiring [a second] an image of said printed image, and a computer that executes a watermark reading program for [reading watermark information] detecting a digital watermark signal from [each of] said areas of said image, and code for examining [the] magnitude of the digital watermark [information] signal in said areas [to determine] as a measure of [the] quality of said printing.

16) (Currently amended) The system recited in claim 16 wherein said digital watermark includes a [grid] signal embedded into the image at selected spatial frequencies.

17) (Currently amended) A system for inspecting [determining if the] quality of printed labels [is acceptable], said labels being printed with an image which includes a digital watermark embedded in [multiple] areas of said image,
means for acquiring an image of said labels after said labels have been printed,
means for [reading] detecting a watermark signal [data] from [each area] the areas of said image of said labels, and
means for determining an extent to which the watermark signal is detected in the areas as a measure of print [indicating that the] quality of said labels [is unacceptable if the watermark data read from each area of said image does not meet specified criteria].

18) (Currently amended) The system recited in claim 17 wherein said digital watermark includes a [grid] signal embedded into the image at selected spatial frequencies.

19. (New) The method of claim 1 wherein strength of the digital watermark signal in the areas is used as a measure of print quality.

20. (New) The method of claim 19 wherein strength of the digital watermark is measured as a function of spatial frequencies that have been modified to embed the digital watermark in the areas.

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21. (New) The method of claim 1 wherein the digital watermark is embedded in a background image.

22. (New) The method of claim 8 wherein strength of the digital watermark signal in areas of the image where the digital watermark is redundantly embedded is used as a measure of print quality.

23. (New) The method of claim 22 wherein strength is measured as a function of spatial frequencies that have been modified to embed the digital watermark.

24. (New) The method of claim 8 wherein the digital watermark is embedded in a background image.